

Message Text

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FOR USIA FOR IAA

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SUBJ: MEDIA REPS TO VISIT RUSSIA, EASTERN COUNTRIES

1. SUN, JAN 18 EDIT OF OFFICIAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DAILY ETHIOPIAN HERALD CARRIED FRONT-PAGE STORY DEALING WITH
UPCOMING TRIP TO SOVIET UNION AND "SOME EASTERN EUROPEAN
COUNTRIES" BY DEL OF ETHIOPIAN MASS MEDIA PERSONNEL.
(GROUP LEFT ADDIS MON, JAN 19.)

2. STORY STATES DEL MADE UP OF "MEMBERS OF THE
ARMED FORCES, POLICE AND THE MIN OF INFO AND
NAT'L GUIDANCE AND IS LED BY LTCOL ASRAT DESTA, CHAIRMAN
OF THE INFO AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF
THE PMAC...." NONE RPT NONE OF MEMBERS OF DEL
ARE IDENTIFIED IN STORY, BUT THEY INCLUDE PERMANENT SECRETARY
OF MININFO, HEAD OF PRESS DEPT., EDITOR OF AMHARIC
LANGUAGE DAILY ADDIS ZEMEN, DEP HEAD OF ETHIOPIAN NEWS
AGENCY, HEAD OF PROGRAMS FOR ETHIOPIAN TV, MININFO'S DEP HEAD
OF PR AND RADIO ETHIOPIA OFFICIAL.

3. APPROX 20 PEOPLE COMPRISE TOTAL ETHIOPIAN DEL.

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COMMENT: SEVERAL MININFO OFFICIALS HAVE VISITED SOVIET UNION AND

OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN CITIES DURING PAST YEAR, BUT THIS IS BY FAR LARGEST AND HIGHEST LEVEL GROUP TO MAKE TRIP SINCE MILITARY REGIME TOOK POWER. LENGTH OF STAY NOT RPT NOT MENTIONED IN STORY, BUT WE HAVE LEARNED THAT TRIP WILL LAST TWO MONTHS -- A SURPRISINGLY LONG TIME FOR A GROUP OF THIS CALIBER, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT INCLUDES COL ASRAT, WHO IS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF TOP PMAC OFFICIALS, AND IS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN HIGH LEVEL "DIRG" POLICY MATTERS.

DECON 21 JAN 77.
CATANOSO

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